

But it was not a celebration for Native American descendants of Pocahontas, for they have yet to be recognized by our federal government. Unlike most Native American tribes that were officially recognized when they signed peace treaties with the federal government, Virginia's six Native American tribes made their peace with the Kings of England. Most notable among these was the Treaty of 1677 between these tribes and King Charles II. This treaty has been recognized by the Commonwealth of Virginia every year for the past 334 years when the Governor accepts tribute from the tribes in a ceremony now celebrated at the Commonwealth Capitol. I had the honor of attending one of what I understand is the longest-celebrated treaty recognition ceremony in the United States.

The forefathers of the tribal leaders who gather on Thanksgiving in Richmond were the first to welcome the English, and during the first few years of settlement, ensured their survival. Had the tribes not assisted those early settlers, they would not have survived. Time has not been kind to the tribes, however. As was the case for most Native American tribes, as the settlement prospered and grew, the tribes suffered. Those who resisted quickly became subdued, were pushed off their historic lands, and, up through much of the 20th Century, were denied full rights as U.S. citizens. Despite their devastating loss of land and population, the Virginia tribes survived, preserving their heritage and their identity. Their story of survival spans four centuries of racial hostility and coercive state and state-sanctioned actions.

The Virginia tribes' history, however, diverges from that of most Native Americans in two unique ways. The first explains why the Virginia tribes were never recognized by the federal government; the second explains why congressional action is needed today. First, by the time the federal government was established in 1789, the Virginia tribes were in no position to seek recognition. They had already lost control of their land, withdrawn into isolated communities and been stripped of most of their rights. Lacking even the rights granted by the English Kings, and our own Bill of Rights, federal recognition was nowhere within their reach.

The second unique circumstance for the Virginia tribes is what they experienced with the destruction of their official records. From the destruction of local courthouses wrought by the Civil War to the 20th Century "paper genocide" perpetrated by the Commonwealth of Virginia, there are gaps in their records which could ultimately invalidate their petitions for recognition that have been filed with the Interior Department's Bureau of Indian Affairs.

With great hypocrisy, Virginia's ruling elite pushed policies that culminated with the enactment of the Racial Integrity Act of 1924. This act directed Commonwealth officials, and zealots like Walter Plecker, to destroy Commonwealth and local courthouse records and reclassify in Orwellian fashion all non-whites as "colored." It targeted Native Americans with a vengeance, denying Native Americans in Virginia their identity.

To call oneself a "Native American" in Virginia was to risk a jail sentence of up to one year. In defiance of the law, members of Virginia's tribes traveled out of state to obtain marriage licenses or to serve their country in wartime. The law remained in effect until it

was struck down in federal court in 1967. In that intervening period between 1924 and 1967, Commonwealth officials waged a war to destroy all public and many private records that affirmed the existence of Native Americans in Virginia. Historians have affirmed that no other state compares to Virginia's efforts to eradicate its citizens' Indian identity.

All of Virginia's state-recognized tribes have filed petitions with the Bureau of Acknowledgment seeking federal recognition. But it is a very heavy burden the Virginia tribes will have to overcome, and one fraught with complications that officials from the bureau have acknowledged may never be resolved in their lifetime. The acknowledgment process is already expensive, subject to unreasonable delays, and lacking in dignity. Virginia's paper genocide only further complicates these tribes' quest for federal recognition, making it difficult to furnish corroborating state and official documents and aggravating the injustice already visited upon them. The Bureau of Acknowledgment officials have admitted that the Virginia petitions may not be resolved for generations.

In appreciation of the fact that the issue of gambling and its economic and moral dimensions influence many Members' perspectives on tribal recognition issues, you should be aware that the bill has carried language every year prohibiting these tribes from gaming on their federal lands. This prohibition extends indefinitely, even if Virginia were to one day change course and allow gaming. The tribes find gambling offensive to their moral beliefs. They are seeking federal recognition because it is a matter of justice.

In the name of decency, fairness and humanity, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and bring closure to the centuries of injustice Virginia's Native American tribes have experienced.

#### TRIBUTE TO JENNIFER ELLEFSON

##### HON. PETE OLSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 23, 2013

Mr. OLSON. Mr. Speaker, I am privileged to interact with some of the brightest students in the 22nd Congressional District who serve on my Congressional Youth Advisory Council. I have gained much by listening to the high school students who are the future of this great nation. They provide important insight into the concerns of our younger constituents and hopefully get a better sense of the importance of being an active participant in the political process. Many of the students have written short essays on a variety of topics and I am pleased to share these with my House colleagues.

Jennifer Ellefson is a junior at George Ranch High School in Fort Bend County, Texas. Her essay topic is: In your opinion, what role should government play in our lives?

Government should be nothing more than a regulatory force. Too often people see the Government as a great power, but the government should only be given the power it is deemed worthy of by the people. That is the principle of popular sovereignty, the people rule. Without that principle, governments lose balance and forget their purpose. Our government's purposes are in protection,

business regulation, law enforcement, and medicine among other things. The government's job is not to be a part of your life, but to keep your life from becoming anarchy, and provide ease for certain things. An oppressive form of government is one that is invasive in day to day life; the American government should play scarcely a role in your life outside of organization and providing order. Our police officers are given their power by the people. They are not above us, but they regulate us due to the right we give them through our government, the people's government. Law enforcement ensures that we are not victimized by the masses daily, without the government to regulate our protection, anarchy would ensue, and violence and murder would ravage the land. Business regulation insures that employees cannot be mistreated, and that customers are kept safe through standard requirements of cleanliness and durability. Before the FDA, thousands of people would die a year from food poisoning. While some still slip through the cracks, the government has all but eliminated business corruption at the production and employment levels. Standardized medical procedure has saved millions of lives in the last century; if it were not government regulated there would still be frequent abortions in truck beds and household remedies killing people all over. Now the government is attempting to regulate medicine even further; socialized medicine, in my view, is a must. Part of government regularity is protection; is it not protection to ensure that even a homeless man should not die from a disease because he cannot afford the surgery? Some people say it is invasive, but further taxation for the better of you and all is not an invasion of life, it is a regulation of order. Regulation and facilitation is the government role and nothing further.

#### PORT OPPORTUNITY, REINVESTMENT AND TRAINING ACT

##### HON. JANICE HAHN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, May 23, 2013

Mr. HAHN. Ms. Speaker, as Memorial Day, the unofficial start of summer approaches, students across the country are turning to figuring out how they are going to fill their time. But this summer, many of those students looking for a summer job face an uphill battle.

High teen unemployment continues to cast a shadow over communities struggling to bounce back from the recession. For many teens, summer is a time to find their first jobs and learn their first lessons about making and managing money, building vital professional and personal skills. Unfortunately, the recovery has not reached many of our communities, which impacts these teens as they struggle to find employment to keep themselves out of trouble and maybe bring in a little extra money to ease the burden on their families today, we are diminishing their ability to compete in the workforce tomorrow.

Last summer, the unemployment rate for teenagers in the United States remained intolerably high, at 17.1 percent. The teen unemployment rate is even higher for young African-Americans and Latinos, putting them at a special disadvantage as they try to enter the adult workforce. Just in my community of Compton, the overall unemployment rate jumped to a staggering 20 percent, as schools